

15th International Roundtable on Business Survey Frames
Washington, D.C. – October 22 – 26, 2001
Session No. 9 Session Summary Bill Iwig, NASS, USA
Wrap-up and Planning

The Wrap-up and Planning Session provided the Roundtable participants an opportunity to review important issues that were raised during the meetings and to develop preliminary plans for the 16th International Roundtable on Business Survey Frames to be held in Lisbon, October 21 - 25, 2002.

As discussed during Session 1, there was general agreement that the primary focus of the Roundtable should be the Business Register, including content, structure, continuity, and linkages between different register units. Upstream and downstream issues are of interest primarily in how they affect the Business Register structure and/or content.

There was also general agreement regarding the structure and content of the Roundtable meetings. The Progress Reports are an important feature of each Roundtable. New countries attending the Roundtable for the first time should include a brief overview of the content and structure of their business registers. All Progress Reports should include discussion of:

- status and update on progress of business register
- issues and problems resolved during the last year
- issues and plans unresolved during the last year, and
- future plans.

It is also important to recognize and document, when possible, the impact of previous Roundtable discussions on developing new initiatives and Business Register improvements. We should schedule at least 15 - 20 minutes for each report to allow time for the presentation and questions.

The paper sessions on selected topics should also be scheduled to allow sufficient time for discussion and questions of each paper. Each convenor is responsible for arranging and scheduling their session. It was suggested that each session be limited to two or three papers with questions prepared in advance for further discussion with the goal of approximately eight papers in a full day. Only fifteen papers were presented at this Roundtable which provided sufficient time for discussion. A few other papers were prepared and included in the meeting materials, but were not presented because the author could not attend.

It was suggested that we have evaluation or comment forms each day in order to gather questions from participants which need further discussion. These comments could also be used to develop session topics for the next Roundtable.

Dissemination of Roundtable materials and outcomes was also discussed. After the 1998 Roundtable, Statistics Finland prepared a CD-ROM containing all papers from Roundtables 1 - 12. We will probably want to create an updated CD in the near future. Recently, a web-site has been established by the host country for each Roundtable which contains copies of the Progress Reports, papers, and session summaries. The current web-site also has a link to the previous Roundtable web-site. The question of whether the Roundtable needs a permanent web-site remains unresolved. It was suggested that the host country prepare a printed summary document containing brief paper summaries and session summaries that could be sent to participants and used to promote the Roundtable.

Roundtable participants should attempt to increase participation by promoting the Roundtable at other meetings and ensuring that potential new attendees receive a formal invitation. New names should be sent to the Roundtable host each year. It was suggested that participation by a U.N. representative would be very beneficial.

Suggested session topics for the 16th Roundtable next year included the following.

1. Business Frame Profile Issues - Ed Walker, U.S. Bureau of the Census, agreed to coordinate the planning of this session. Potentially, participating countries would be asked to profile their business register using a standard format in order to identify similarities, differences, and best practices. There is interest in identifying how different countries handle complex business structures on their registers.
2. Business Demography and Continuity - Merja Hult, Eurostat, agreed to coordinate the planning of this session. This is a continuing topic for the Roundtable. The need for statistics on business demography seems ever increasing. This session would share information on how countries identify demographic events on their business register. What rules, criteria, and methodologies are used? What demographic outputs are produced for enterprises and for local units?
3. Treatment of Different Business Arrangements on the Register - Hugues Picard, INSEE - France, agreed to coordinate the planning of this session. Many complex business arrangement exist today which involve the following issues: cross-border structures, joint ventures, franchising, short term contracts, and a growing use of leased employees. How are countries handling these and other complex arrangements on their business registers? There is a need to share "best practices" on these issues and discuss general guidelines.
4. Modeling the Linkage Between Statistical and Administrative Units - Harrie van der Ven, Statistics Netherlands, agreed to coordinate the planning of this session. The use of administrative data for statistical purposes is increasing. Frequently, the administrative units do not directly correspond to statistical units on the business register and the data do not directly correspond to statistical variables. There is a continuing need to share experiences and best practices on modeling the linkage between statistical and administrative units.
5. Managing Relationships with Administrative Agencies - Jean Ritzen, Statistics Netherlands, and Bill Iwig, NASS/USDA, agreed to coordinate the planning of this session. Good management of the relationships between administrative and statistical agencies is very important in order to develop effective use of administrative data. Good relationships require a solid infrastructure, transparency, trust, understanding, and professionalism. An introductory paper on this topic was presented by Jean Ritzen at this Roundtable. What management practices are being used by other agencies to develop win-win relationships?
6. Developing a Strategic Plan: Balancing Output and Quality - Rick Clayton, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, agreed to coordinate the planning of this session. Strategic plans for Business Register improvement should recognize the necessary balance between the amount of statistical output and the quality of the output. Also, a missing component in many strategic plans is the human resource aspect of selecting and training business register managers. This session will explore the experiences and examples of agencies in developing strategic plans.